An Excellent LETTER FROM John Basire *Doctor of* LAWS, To his Son *ISAAC BASIRE.*

P.C. Chamberlayne

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A true Copy of an EXCELLENT LETTER

From his Dear Father *John Baſire*, Doctor of Laws, and Advocate in the Parliament of *Rouen* in *France*, written to his Son, (being then a Scholar of the Famous School of *Eraſmus* at *Rotterdam* in *Holland*:) dated the 8th of *December* 1623. (the Original whereof the Son keeps as a Jewel, preſerved by providence, above 45 years:) and at the earneſt deſire of ſome godly and learned Friends, faithfully tranſlated out of French into Engliſh by *Iſaac Baſire* (his unworthy Son) now D. D. and Archdeacon of *Northumberland*.

MY Son, I have received your Letter of the 28th of *October* laſt, which hath afforded me no ſmall Joy and Content; ſince by the reading of it, I have been duly informed, as well con-

cerning the prosperity of your first Voyage, as of your own good health, and of the notable proof you have already given of your advancement and progress in the knowledge of good Letters; seeing that, at your first arrival, and upon your first Trial, you have been judged worthy of the highest Form: God be praised for it, and give you grace to continue better and better: I do very much commend your frugality, for *Magnum est vectigal Parsimonia*, (Good Husbandry is a great Revenue,) but I would blame you exceedingly

ingly, if you ſhould be too ſparing to the Coſt of your Reputation, or of your Health; which you ought to prefer to the purchaſe of all Arts and Sciences, ſince, by reaſon of your indiſpoſition, they would become uſeleſs and unfruitful. Therefore, flie all Exceſs of Labour of the Mind, and rather learn in two years, what you might learn in one, if with the loſs of your health; being always mindful, That your Studies muſt be regulated by and proportionated unto your Natural Strength; *Studia enim Naturæ Regula metienda ſunt.*

Have a due regard to your ſmall Age (*a*) and to the weakneſs of your Natural Strength. Beware alſo of ſuffering extream Colds, which you muſt ſhake off ſprightfully by exerciſe of Body; which will render you ſupple, cheerful, and active, and capable of greater Labour: purchaſing thereby to your ſelf a ſtrong and able Conſtitution and habit of Body: And ſeeing that God hath put into your heart the reſolution to chuſe, and to follow ſo holy and ſo laudable a Vocation (of which notwithſtanding you ought not

(a) *Being then but fifteen years and ten Moneths, and but tender and ſickly by Nature; though in proceſs of time, by Labour and Cuſtom, through Gods bleſſing, hardened into a healthful Temper.*

not (*b*) to have made choice of your ſelf) to the end you may become worthy and capable of it, to diſcharge the ſame as becometh; you muſt wholly diſpoſe your ſelf to live *ſoberly* (c) *righteouſly*, *and godly*, endeavoring, by all poſſible means, to lead your life anſwerable to your Profeſſion; to this end be courteous unto all men, but familiar to few: Do not frequent the company of thoſe whom you will not reſemble; but if debau-

(b) *The Father being a Doctor of Law, did intend his Son for the ſame Faculty; in which ſtudy alſo, out of filial obedience, he ſpent ſome years, ti he propounded to his Father his inclination for the holy Miniſtry, but ſtill with ſubmiſſion to his conſent, which he freely ſignified afterwards by his Letter to Dr.* Morton, *the late L. Biſhop, then of* Lichfield *and after of* Durham; *by whom the Son received Holy Orders.* (c) Titus ii. 12.

ched perſons ſhould entice you to their evil Courſes, conſent you not, leſt by their Converſation, and bad Diſcourſes, your good Nature be perverted, corrupted, or altered for the worſe. *Corrumpunt enim Bonos Mores Colloquia prava:* (d) *Evil Communications corrupt good Manners.* Be ſincere and upright, fearing God, and turn away from evil, as *Eccleſiaſtes* admoniſheth you in the laſt Chapter, verſe 15. *Fear God and keep his Commandements, for that is the whole duty of man:* And ſince (e) *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſ-*

(d) 1 Cor. xv. 33

(e) Prov. i. 7.

wiſdom, (f) *Truſt in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not to your own underſtanding*: By the practice of ſo ſerious an Admonition, you will more and more draw down upon you, and your Labours and Studies the Bleſſing of God, when you ſtill refer them all to his Honour and Glory; for if (as you ought to do) *you acknowledge God in all your ways*, (g) *he will direct your paths*. We will joyn our fervent and inſtant prayers with yours, that as (h) *God hath given you to will, ſo he will give you power to do, of his good pleaſure*, to his

(f) Prov. iii. 5.

(g) Prov. iii. 6.

(h) Phil. ii. 13.

his Glory, your own Salvation, and our Comfort: Mean while, recreate your ſelf from time to time by ſeaſonable *Divertiſements* from your Studies to Exerciſes commendable, vertuous, and no ways Childiſh (i) *Siquidem alia ætas alios mores poſtulat*: Change of Age requires change of Manners. Give your ſelf alſo, at your ſpare hours, to *learn the Language of the Countrey* where you are, as alſo *the Art of Muſick*, and to *write* as good a hand as you poſſibly can: It will not be one of the leaſt perfections you may purchaſe, to

(i) 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Terent.

to get a good hand, and very legible. But chiefly you muſt not ſtudy ſo much to have your Head well filled, as to have a Head well fitted or compoſed. Accuſtom your ſelf alſo, as much as you can to *ſpeak treatably* and diſtinctly; even when you learn your Leſſons: becauſe Cuſtom turns into an Habit. *Eſt enim Conſuetudo altera Natura:* For Cuſtom is a ſecond Nature. Be ſure of this, that by a kind of volubility, and an over-haſty Tongue, or precipitated Pronunciation, you will find your ſelf put to it, when you are to acquit

your

your ſelf well of the duty which belongs to your Office: That defect may render your Function unpleaſing, void of gracefulneſs, and without Edification. Take heed of being any wayes Vindicative, or given to Revenge, but reſerve the Vengeance to God. (k) *For Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it, ſaith the Lord.* But on the contrary, be charitable, meek, gentle, and gracious; and be always mindful that (l) *A ſoft anſwer turneth away wrath, but grievous words ſtir up anger.* Never do that to another, which

(k) Rom. xii. 19.

(l) Prov. xv. 1.

which you would be loath another ſhould do to you; and be ſure, That (m) *he that walketh uprightly walketh ſurely, but he that perverteth his wayes ſhall be known.* Shun and deteſt therefore all manner of Pride and of Hypocriſie: Becauſe (n) *God ſcattereth the Proud, in the Imagination of their heart;* and (o) *whenſoever Pride cometh, then cometh ſhame: but with the Lowly is Wiſdom.* This is it I do now exhort you to follow, and to put in practice: Adding to this end, for your encouragement, what wiſe

(m) Prov. x. 9.

(n) I... i. 51.

(o) Prov. xi. 2.

Solo-

Solomon hath delivered in the firſt Chapter of the *Proverbs*, verſes 8. and 9. *My Son, hear the Inſtruction of thy Father, and forſake not the Law of thy Mother: for they ſhall be an Ornament of Grace unto thy Head, and Chains about thy Neck.* Your good Propenſions, and natural Inclinations, put me in good hope that you will make good uſe of theſe my Fatherly Inſtructions. The Plague continues ſtill in this City, without truce or abatement; God in mercy will aſſwage it, if it be his good pleaſure, when we ſhall turn away from our

own

own evil wayes. Be mindful of us in all your prayers, as we keep a continual remembrance of you in the prayers which we here daily offer up unto God; you may be ſure, that, in ſo doing, you ſhall not, by the Grace of God, want our ſupply and aſſiſtance, ſo far as ſhall be requiſite and neceſſary for the Continuance, Progreſs, and Conſummation, of your Studies; if it ſhall pleaſe God to prolong our lives, till that time wherein you may have accompliſhed them. Upon this ground, I ſhall beſeech God, my dear Son, to preſerve you

in

in his holy Tuition and Protection, and to fulfil you with his Bleſſings Spiritual and Corporal. Farewel.

From Rouen *this viij. of* December, 1623.

Your Father and beſt Friend,

J. B.

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